

How Do I File A Criminal Complaint?

1. To file a Criminal Complaint you must be 18 or older. If you are not 18, call the Dispute Mediation Office at 595-3106.
2. Go to the Dispute Mediation Office in the Hall of Justice. This office is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Bring a picture I.D. and the defendant's full name and address with you. Have your facts together and the names and addresses of any witnesses before you go.

3. An intake officer or clerk will help you file your complaint.
4. A judge will review your complaint and do one of the following:
 - Refer the case to mediation. You will receive a letter and a hearing will be held within 7-10 days. If mediation is unsuccessful, you may request that the complaint be reviewed by a judge again.
 - Issue a criminal summons for the defendant to appear in District Court. This is just a notice and will advise the defendant to appear in court for the arraignment.
 - Issue an arrest warrant. The defendant will be arrested, taken to jail, and later arraigned in District Court.
 - Reject your complaint. If your complaint is rejected, you will receive notice within 7-10 days from dispute mediation.

If either a criminal summons or an arrest warrant is issued, you will be given notice by mail when you need to appear in court.

No attorney is required.

For more information call the County Attorney's Office at 574-6336.

LMHS does not discriminate in employment or in the provision of services on the basis of disability, sex, race, color, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation or gender identity.

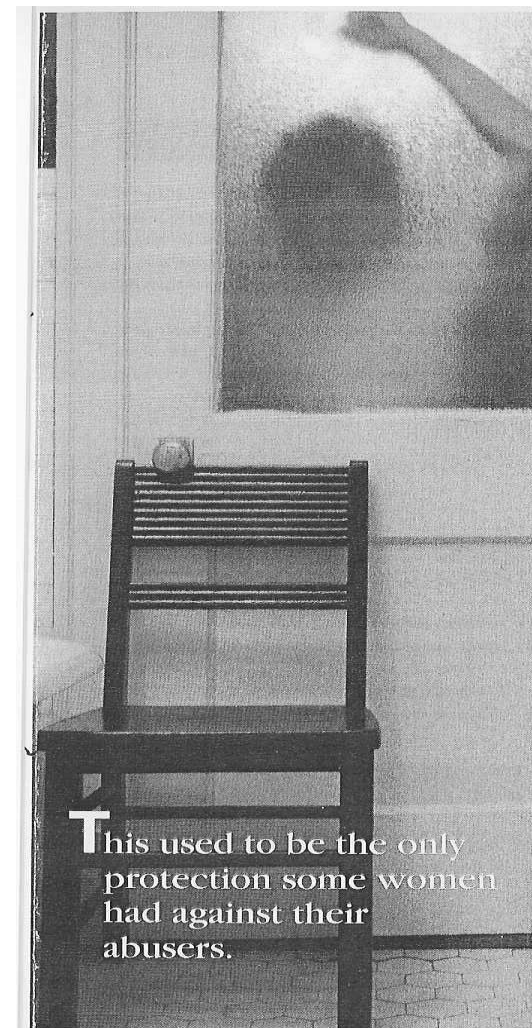


Jerry E. Abramson
Mayor

26 Member
Metro Council

Spouse Abuse Center.....	581-7222
E.P.O. Clerk	595-4697
Warrant Office, Dispute Mediation	595-3106
County Attorney	574-6336
Commonwealth Attorney	595-2340
Louisville Metro Suburban Division	574-2111
Louisville Metro Police:	
Urban Division	574-7111
Jefferson County Sheriff	574-5400
Adult Protective Services (24 hours)	595-4803
Child Protective Services (24 hours).....	595-4550
Probation and Parole	595-4035
Legal Aid Society	584-1254
Crisis and Information	589-4313
Center for Women & Families:	
Domestic Violence Program	581-7222
Central Intake Center	
600 W. Jefferson	595-0855
(Other office at 700 W. Jefferson) ...	595-4697

Each LMPD Office has its own Domestic Violence Detective and/or Domestic Violence Advocate.



Louisville Metro Office For Women

Urban Government Center
810 Barret Avenue, 2nd Floor
Louisville, KY 40204

(502) 574-5360 (502) 574-6888 Fax
E-mail: ofw@louisvilleky.gov
Website: www.louisvilleky.gov/OFW

What Can Be Done To Stop an Abuser?

A civil order called an emergency protective order (EPO) may be filed. This is a judge's order commanding the abuser to stop his or her violence against the victim. In addition, you may file a criminal complaint. This may result in a warrant being issued for the abuser's arrest, and the abuser being charged with a crime in a court of law. Both an EPO and a criminal complaint may be filed.

To file a protective order (EPO) you must:

1. Be a family member, ex-spouse or member of an unmarried couple who is currently living together, formerly lived together or who has a child in common.
2. Be 18 or have a guardian with you.
3. Present the abuser's current home or work address.
4. If possible, have the abuser's birth date and/or social security number.

How Do I Get a Protective Order?

- 1) Go to the Hall of Justice. If you go between 7:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. during the week, go to the Family Court Clerk's office. At any other time, go to the District Court Criminal and Traffic Division Desk. There is an information booth in the Hall of Justice if you need assistance. You can take out an EPO 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- 2) Tell the clerk that you would like an Emergency Protective Order.



How Will an EPO Protect Me?

An EPO may grant you any or all of the following:

- 1) An order to stop the abuser from any further acts of violence.
- 2) An order not to sell or destroy any of the family's property.
- 3) An order (if you and the abuser live in the same place) for the abuser to leave home.
- 4) An order to restrain the abuser from any contact or communication with the victim.
- 5) Temporary child custody.

You will be asked to sign the EPO. Because this is the document that will go before a judge telling your side of the story, it is important that all the information is accurate.

Be sure to read the document and check for accuracy before you sign.

A hearing will be held within 14 days.

What Happens at the Hearing?

The date for your hearing is written on your EPO. It is very important that you attend this hearing. If you do not go, your EPO may no longer be valid.

At the hearing you must prove that the facts you wrote down while filing for your EPO are true.

If you have witnesses to the abuse, you should bring these people with you. If you were bruised or otherwise injured, bring any photographs you have of your injuries. If you don't have pictures, bring people who saw your injuries. If you went to a hospital or doctor because of your injuries, bring any medical records you have.

If the judge believes that domestic violence occurred, you will receive a Domestic Violence Order (DVO). This order is valid for up to a year. The DVO can give you the same protection your EPO gave you. In addition you may ask the judge to have the DVO include temporary child support and counseling for either or both parties.

The DVO may also include other orders tailored to your own situation to prevent future domestic violence. If there is something special that you would like to have in the DVO that you think will protect you, ask the judge to include it in the order.

What Happens After the Hearing?

Once you have an EPO or a DVO, you should keep it with you at all times. Make sure your children each have their own copy to keep with them, too.

If the abuser does anything in violation of your EPO or DVO, call the police immediately. Be sure to tell the police that you have an EPO or DVO.

No attorney or fee is required.